

Arius and Athanasius

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" As I was returning on horseback to the city which bears my name, Athanasius, the Bishop, presented himself so unexpectedly in the middle of the highway, with certain individuals who accompanied him, that I felt exceedingly surprised on beholding him, God, who sees all, is my witness that at first I did not know who he was, but some of my attendants, having ascertained this and the subject of his complaint, gave me the necessary information. I did not accord him an interview, but he persevered in requesting an audience, and, although I refused him and was on the point of ordering that he should be removed from my presence, he told me, with greater boldness than he had previously manifested, that he sought no other favour of me than that I should summon you hither, in order that he might, in your presence, complain of the injustice that had been done to him."

Such boldness had the success it deserved. Con-stantine evidently made enquires from Count Diony-sius, and, discovering that the Council at Tyre was a mere travesty of justice, ordered the bishops to come forthwith to Constantinople. But before these instructions reached them they had received the report of the Egyptian commissioners, and, on the strength of it, had condemned Athanasius by a majority of votes, recognised the Meletians as orthodox, and, adjourning to Jerusalem for the dedication of the new church, had there pronounced Arius to be a true Catholic and in full communion with the Church. The Emperor's letter, which began with a reference to the " tumults and disorders " which had marked their sessions, was a plain intimation that he disapproved of their proceedings, and only six